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Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Inquiry/Project Work: Affecting Change in our World*

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| --- |
| “*It's the hammer of justice*  *It's the bell of freedom*  *C:\Users\amy\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\2KN6ZHAY\MC900383684[1].wmfIt's the song about love between my brothers and my sisters*  *All over this land*”  Lee Hays and Pete Seeger |

Pick up your hammer and bell, and hydrate your singing voice!

The time is now!

What is it, and what will I do?

In a nutshell, your job is to determine a need or cause which you desire to champion, team up with 1-3 others who share this desire, investigate possible ways your group can affect positive change in relation to that issue, collect data to determine the effect your work had, and showcase your work in a creative/self-selected way, wrapping up with a celebration.

How do I begin?

With a large range of projects I would like for you to explore, engage in, and choose from, a first step will be an initial exposure to the issues. We will delve into powerful literature to become exposed to the issues through read-alouds, literature circles, whole class readings of short stories, poetry, memoirs, songs, novel units, independent reading from topic-related selections, seminars, etc. We will visit issues such as bullying, prejudices against races, religions, etc, oppression of various groups in the past and present – far away, and very close to home), modern day slavery & human trafficking, oppression of women in 3rd world countries, child labor, educational issues world-wide (especially involving literacy), and the pros and cons of war and pacifism. Engaging you in samplings of this literature will hopefully help you determine an issue you would like to explore and problem solve. As our cycle is “affecting change”, we will also be studying heroes from history who have successfully affected positive change in our world on a large or small scale to study as role models.

After these literature exposures, as well as various related video clips, you will choose 3 of the issues you would most like to engage in for this trimester. Since some of the topics are rather sensitive, we will survey or interview parents to determine their comfort level with the topics. From yours and your parents’ responses, we will form inquiry groups of 2-4 students; making sure each of you is working with one of your top topic choices.

Now What?? - Inquiry group steps:

* Begin with the end in mind, deciding first upon the scope of the project. With whom? To whom? For what group or audience? How much?
* Help to select and identify state and national learning standards that will be addressed with the project
* Determine your driving/essential question(s) such as any of those listed at the end of this document (or creating your own)
* Help plan the project assessments (aligning the products with outcomes, determining what to assess, using rubrics)
* Map out the project – organize tasks and activities, decide how to launch the project, gather resources, draw a storyboard, and map the projects,
* Proceed with plans - As you go, you will be meeting with me, filling out weekly planning sheets, learning logs, and investigation briefs. I will be sitting in on discussions, offering support and resources, helping to devise appropriate check lists for your project

So what will I be assessed on?

* Investigative background research(investigation briefs, learning log or journal notes)
* Problem solving skills
* Required letters (minimum of 2) to possible stake-holders
* Cooperative group work/collaboration/communication with group members
* Deadlines on checklists
* Ongoing progress (journal notes/weekly planning logs)
* Culminating product (group determines the product and helps to create rubric for it)
* Final paper (w/teacher- created, student-modified rubric)

Potential “Driving” or “Essential” Questions:

* How can we share our love of literature with the community and/or wider world?
* How can we affect change in the world through literacy?
* How can we affect racial healing through literature?
* How can we affect racial healing in any way?
* Can we make a difference in modern day slavery and human trafficking?
* How can we be proactive in fighting bullying in our school and community?
* How can we help to empower oppressed groups of people?
* Can we have an effect on world hunger, poverty, or infant mortality rates?
* To what extent can we affect change by piggy-backing with existing groups such as “Operation Smile” and “Free the Children”?

Initial Timeline and Checklist

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Task | Student Check-in | Teacher Check-in | Notes/Comments |
|  | Reexamine the literature and resources regarding the issues |  |  |  |
|  | Submit top 3 issue interests/journal notes |  |  |  |
|  | Formal letter to parents for permission to further explore those topics |  |  |  |
|  | create and submit one or two proposals |  |  |  |
|  | Written intention of scope/journal notes |  |  |  |
|  | Standards addressed/planning sheet |  |  |  |
|  | Driving/essential question(s) |  |  |  |
|  | Project assessments |  |  |  |
|  | Rubric for culminating product/journal notes |  |  |  |
|  | Written “launching” plan |  |  |  |
|  | Story board/planning sheet one and initial roles |  |  |  |
|  | Begin (new checklist for your group) |  |  |  |

I have created a list of web sites, videos, and texts for you investigate to get started (discovering, of course your own additional resources as you go).